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Fischer's Edition

PLAYS

for

YOUNG PEOPLE

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3664	**Their Lordships.** Two-act comedy for young people.....net	.35
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by

Edith M. Burrows

PUBLISHED BY

J. FISCHER & BRO., NEW YORK

7, 8 and 11, BIBLE HOUSE

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"THE ANTI-AUNTS"

BY

EDITH M. BURROWS

PS635
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

PHILIP CHESTER.....*President of the "Anti-Aunts"*
CARA CHESTER .....*His wife*
AUNT MINERVA DAVIS.....*A problem to be solved*
JEAN SEELYE .....*A guest of the Chesters*
VICTOR MERRILL.....*A friend of Philip*
BOB CHESTER.....*Philip's younger brother*
VIOLET DE BRACY.....*Of the theatrical persuasion*
DELIA .....*The heartless maid*

TIME—The present.

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DEC 26 1913

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Scene.

The living-room in the Chesters' apartment. Doors at center back and at left near back. On either side of center door are book-cases, over which a few good pictures hang. There are two windows at right and a fireplace at left near front. A couch is placed near windows at right. A large reading table is near center front, on which is a litter of magazines, books, and smoking conveniences. Between the fireplace and left door hangs a rack of pipes. Under this is an easy chair, and several other comfortable chairs in the room add to its "lived in" look. On the shelf over the fireplace stand two or three framed photographs. At right of stage near back is a small table with telephone on it. In the first act a small card-table is used, which is placed near fireplace on left.

Act. I.

TIME—Evening. SCENE—The Chester's living-room.

Curtain rises, disclosing Philip, Cara, Jean, and Victor in evening dress, seated at card-table in the Chester's living-room.

Philip—Come on, Victor, play the game! You're so absent-minded these days one would think you were in love.

Victor—In love? Nonsense! I don't believe in it. Love is an exploded theory.

Cara—Well, I like that, young man! I'll grant you that it has explosive qualities. You want to take good care that it doesn't explode anywhere around you, though.

Victor—Your pardon, Mrs. Chester. I'll take it back.

Philip—You'd better. If you had stuck to that remark, you'd have been in Cara's bad graces permanently.

Jean—We're waiting for your play again, Mr. Merrill.

VICTOR—Oh, I say—I'm awfully stupid to-night. It's only the patience of Job that makes you people put up with me.

(*Enter Delia center, with telegram on card tray. She offers it to Philip.*)

DELIA—Telegram for you, Mr. Chester.

(*Philip takes it and Delia exits left.*)

PHILIP—Thanks. (*Turns it over before opening it.*) Now what do you suppose is in that beastly thing? I hate telegrams!

VICTOR—Well, if that isn't a regular school-girl trick. Why don't you open it and see what's in it?

PHILIP (*Dryly*)—Thanks for "them kind words." Here goes! (*Tears open the telegram and reads.*) Oh, my Lord!

JEAN—What a remarkable message! Is that all?

PHILIP—That's enough, if you did but know it. Here, Cara, read this quick. (*Hands her the telegram.*)

CARA (*Horrified*)—Good gracious, Phil! What shall we do?

PHILIP—Hanged if I know! (*He rises from table and paces about the room.*)

VICTOR—What in creation is in that telegram to make such a fuss over?

JEAN—There's no one dead, is there?

PHILIP—No such luck.

CARA—Philip!

PHILIP—Oh, well; show them the telegram.

CARA (*She rises and hands telegram to Victor*)—Here.

JEAN (*She leans over the table and reads the telegram in Victor's hands*)—"Am coming to pay you a visit. Expect me to-night. Aunt Minerva Davis." Is that all?

PHILIP AND CARA (*Together*)—"Is that all!"

VICTOR—Evidently, we know not Aunt Minerva!

PHILIP—You can thank your lucky stars for that deliverance.

CARA—You oughtn't to speak in that way of her, Philip, for she is your own aunt, you know.

PHILIP—That's right; rub it in! Well, I didn't pick out my aunts, did I?

VICTOR—Is it time for me to go? (*Rises from the table, and pretending to be scared, makes for the center door.*)

PHILIP (*Rushes after Victor and grabs him by the coat*)—Come back here, you idiot! Would you desert your friends in their hour of need? (*Both men come back laughing.*)

CARA—Phil, you go downstairs and beg the janitor to put on plenty of steam to-night. You know Aunt Minerva hates to be the least bit cool, and I'll go to break the news to Delia. That's a job I don't care for. She's been awfully independent lately.

JEAN—Can't we do something to help?

CARA—Just stick by us, and after Aunt Minerva comes, there'll be plenty for all of us to do. (*Exit Cara left.*)

PHILIP—Well, it's me for the janitor, I suppose. (*Exit center.*)

JEAN—Poor Cara! That's what comes from marrying a man with an Aunt Minerva.

VICTOR—Yes, in choosing a husband, a girl should always pick out a man with as few relatives as possible. Now, I have no family at all.

JEAN—Yes, that's very nice—I mean that's too bad; but we were talking about Philip's family, weren't we?

VICTOR—To be sure. Do you know anything about this Aunt Minerva?

JEAN—Very little. I only know that she's very eccentric, but very rich, and that Philip and Cara are her nearest relatives except Bob, whom she detests. Naturally, they are anxious to appear as well as possible when she comes here.

VICTOR—Ah! I begin to see the cause of the family's distracted condition. It's a case of ducats, is it?

JEAN—Isn't that a rather horrid way to put it?

VICTOR—Perhaps; but it's the truth, according to your own account. Well, we can only wish them good luck with Aunt Minerva, and do our part.

(*Enter Philip center, with rather a chagrinned smile.*) Hello! old man, what's the report from the lower region?

PHILIP—Bad news. The janitor had already regulated the heat for the night, and it seems that the rules of this place are like the "laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not." I begged and implored, but nothing doing. If he'd sent up some of the hot air that he wasted on me down there, we'd have all been roasting.

VICTOR (*Moving toward center door*)—Too bad, old fellow. Let me have a try at him.

PHILIP—No, no; don't! I succeeded in getting him so mad that he announced if we didn't like the temperature of the house, he could recommend a place for us all where the heat was guaranteed. (*All laugh.*) If you say anything now, it would be just like him to turn off all the heat and let us shiver.

VICTOR—I see. Well, if that's the case, I'd better keep out of it.

JEAN (*With a wicked gleam in her eye*)—Are you sure that you can?

VICTOR (*Surprised*)—Can what?

JEAN—Keep out of that place the janitor referred to?

VICTOR—I'll get even with you yet. (*Shakes fist at her.*)

(*Enter from left Cara, almost in tears.*)

CARA—Oh dear! Oh dear!

PHILIP—What's the matter, old girl? Is the Emerald Isle on a tear? I'll fix her!

CARA—You can't this time. She's going to leave.

PHILIP—Thunder! When?

CARA—Right now. She's packing her things. Says she'd made up her mind to give notice anyhow, and this news of Aunt Minerva's coming only hastened matters. But what am I to do? (*Sinks into chair in despair.*)

PHILIP—Whew! That is pretty bad, for Aunt Minerva is a stickler on having things run by clock-work

in a house. She has plenty of money herself, and doesn't realize that people who have to scratch along with one maid ever encounter any more domestic jars than she does.

VICTOR—I'm awfully sorry for you two people. I couldn't pose as the butler, could I?

PHILIP—Heavens, no, man! She'd say we were living beyond our income to sport a butler, and besides, we'd have to have a maid anyhow.

JEAN (*Rising and stepping forward*)—Well, then, what's to prevent my serving as a maid?

CARA—You? Nonsense, Jean; we wouldn't think of it.

PHILIP—Why, it's preposterous; but you were mighty good to offer.

JEAN—Well, I can't see that it's either nonsensical or preposterous. Here you people are stranded in about the worst fix you ever got in, and there's no way out except the one I propose. Don't be ridiculous, but look at the thing sensibly. Besides, I'd enjoy it immensely. Please!

VICTOR—Really, there is something in what Miss Seelye says, and you might accept her offer just to tide you over.

CARA (*Weakly*)—But—she is our guest.

JEAN—And I am also your friend. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." This is my first chance to prove my friendship. Don't take it away from me.

PHILIP—All right, Cara; let her do it. And (*turning to Jean*), we'll be everlastingly obliged to you.

JEAN—Come on, Cara. I'll have to dress for my part, and get a few instructions from you, so there won't be any bad breaks after Auntie gets here. (*Exeunt Cara and Jean left.*)

PHILIP (*Looking after them*)—Well, that's a mighty fine thing for that girl to do. Do you know it, Victor?

VICTOR—Rather. Most of the things she does are fine, aren't they?

PHILIP—So that's the way the wind blows, is it? Well, well!

VICTOR—Oh, I'm speaking only for myself. You see, I think she's quite smitten with Bob.

PHILIP—Bob? My brother? (*Laughs.*) Well, you know Bob is quite in love with—(*bell rings violently*). Great Pete! You don't suppose that's the old lady, do you? Excuse me, please. (*Exit center.*)

VICTOR—So Bob is quite in love with her, is he? I've suspected as much for some time. Now I must get a chance at her tomorrow, for I want to find out just how things stand. Hang it! I've promised Bob to go to the game with him to-morrow. Oh, well, I'll get out of it somehow. (*Enter from center Philip and Bob, latter in overcoat and carrying his hat and cane.*) Hello, Bob! It's only you, is it?

BOB—Well, upon my word! What a nice flattering soul you are! Yes, it's only me. Pray, whom were you expecting?

VICTOR—Aunt Minerva.

BOB—Great guns! You don't mean that Aunt Minerva is coming here, do you?

PHILIP—Just so, my boy. Keep cool.

BOB—I'll bet you wouldn't keep cool if you'd had the encounters with the old villain that I have had. Excuse my haste, but I have a pressing engagement elsewhere. (*Starts to run toward center exit.*)

PHILIP—Oh, wait a minute. She isn't due quite yet, and if she does come, you can go out by the fire-escape. You wait here with Victor, while I go to speak to Cara about something. (*Exit Philip left.*)

BOB (*Lighting a cigarette after offering one to Victor, who declines*)—You'll wish you'd taken one to calm your nerves when Aunt Minerva Davis looms on the scene. Ever seen her?

VICTOR—No, and I don't know as I want to, judging from the row she seems to be making over her arrival.

BOB—Humph! That's nothing to what she'll do *after* her arrival! Take my advice, young man, and come down the fire-escape with me.

VICTOR—Yes; but what if we fall and break our necks?

Bob—That's easy, compared to Aunt Minerva. However, do as you please. I've warned you.

Victor—Say, Bob, that reminds me. I can't go to the game with you to-morrow afternoon. I'm awfully sorry, but I have an appointment at the dentist's.

Bob—That's all right, Victor. I was just going to crawl out of that myself. I have a meeting to attend at that time.

Victor—Well, it's all O. K. then.

Philip (*Calls off stage*)—Victor! I say, Victor!

Victor—Right-o. (*Exit Victor left.*)

Bob—Now, that's settled. Then to-morrow I can tell Cara and Jean all about Violet, and pave the way to bringing her here to see them. (*Enter from left Cara and Jean in conventional maid's dress.*) Hello, Cara! Well, for heaven's sake, what have we here?

Cara—My new maid—Jean. Nice, neat appearing girl, don't you think so?

Bob—Cara! Jean! What's all this about, anyhow? Are you crazy, or am I?

Jean—Judging by the difference in our actions at present, I should say you were.

Bob—Wow! Let up, Jean. I'll be good, only kindly explain.

Cara—I would have explained long ago if you hadn't talked so much. Delia's left.

Bob—Oh, don't say that!

Cara—Yes; isn't it a shame?

Bob—It is. You don't know how I regret the loss of all those good pies she made.

Cara—You hateful pig! I really thought you sympathized with me. Men are all alike.

(*Re-enter Philip and Victor.*)

Philip—What's that about men, my love? I'll bet you were calling me names again. Oh, Jerusalem! Just look who's here.

Victor—My name is Victor, not Jerusalem; and I've been looking ever since we came in.

Jean (*Making a bow*)—Can I do anything for you, gentlemen?

VICTOR—Well—er—not just now, but later on, perhaps. (*Bell rings violently.*)

BOB—Golly! Farewell, everybody. (*Dashes out left.*)

CARA—I'm afraid the play begins, Jean. How is your nerve?

JEAN—Fine! Here goes. (*Exit center.*)

(*Philip, Cara, and Victor assume strained attitudes of expectancy.*)

(*Re-enter Jean center door, and announces—*)

JEAN—Miss Minerva Davis.

(*Steps aside and Aunt Minerva enters. She is tall, thin, and very angular. Her clothes are outlandish, and seem to belong to no particular period of fashion. She wears spectacles and carries a queer-looking umbrella and hand-bag.*)

AUNT M. (*Grimly.*)—Well, young people, I've come!

Curtain.

ACT II.

SCENE—*Same as Act I., without the card-table at left.*

TIME—*Afternoon of the next day.*

Curtain rises, disclosing Jean in maid's attire, moving slowly about the room, aimlessly flicking dust from the book-cases. Occasionally she stops to glance through a book or to look at a picture. Aunt Minerva appears in center door and looks at Jean, who does not see her. Finally she steps into the room and speaks.

AUNT M.—For the land's sake, young woman! Are you taking a course in art or literature at my nephew's expense, or are you trying to dust this room? (*Looks suspiciously at top of book-case.*) Ugh! Just as I thought. You haven't dusted even here decently, and you've stood in this spot long enough to clean the whole room. Let me show you how to do it. (*Takes the duster from Jean and proceeds to clean energetically, moving toward left until she reaches pipe-rack.*) What's this?

JEAN—A pipe-rack, Madam.

AUNT M.—Miss, young lady; not Madam! Don't you try any of your foreign tricks on me. I'm not ashamed of being a spinster, so you needn't "Madam" me.

JEAN—Very well, Miss.

AUNT M.—That's better. Now, do you mean to tell me that this pipe-rack belongs to my nephew?

JEAN—Yes, Miss.

AUNT M.—Well, I'll soon fix it so that he won't smoke while I'm here. Smoking is an invention of the Devil; did you know it?

JEAN—No, Miss—yes, Miss.

AUNT M.—Very well; then help me down with this thing. (*Jeans stands on chair and unhooks pipe-rack, which she hands to Aunt Minerva, and then gets down.*) Now you get those matches and other smoking things off the table and put them under the couch with this. (*Jean obeys, and during this speech they slide the pipe-rack and smoking conveniences under the couch.*) Now, I'll show you how to dust this table. (*Dusts table while Jean looks on. Bob appears in center door, and, seeing what is taking place, grins and then ducks out of sight.*) There; that will do, I think. Now I'm going out later on to buy a hat, and when it comes I want you to leave it in this room until I get back. Understand? In this room!

JEAN—Yes, Miss.

(*Aunt Minerva sails out majestically left exit. Jean sits in chair and begins to laugh. Enter Bob cautiously from center. Seeing Jean alone, he laughs, too.*)

BOB—Smoking is an invention of the Devil; did you know it?" (*Pulls out a cigarette case and lights one, saying to Jean*): May I, please?

JEAN—Oh, did you hear it all? How did you get in, and where were you?

BOB—(*Holding up his hand*)—Tut, tut, young lady. If you are taking courses in art and literature at my brother's expense, you ought to know by this time that one question at a time is all that is considered good

form this year. In regard to your first, then—did I hear it? (Mimics Jean's voice) "Yes, Madam," "Yes, Miss," I did. As to how did I get in. Cara saw me coming and opened the door before I had a chance to ring. I'd just finished breaking some news to her, and was looking for you to tell you the same news, when I encountered the dragon putting you through your paces. That answers where I was also, doesn't is? Just outside the door.

JEAN—Well, wasn't it lovely?

BOB—You bet it was. I nearly gave the whole show away three or four times by laughing. But alas! poor Philip! (*Looks at spot where pipe-rack hung.*) I tremble to think of the naughty, naughty words he may use when he discovers his loss. (*Jean and Bob both laugh again.*)

JEAN—Truly though, Bob, I could almost find it in my heart to like Aunt Minerva; she's not a bad sort at all.

BOB—Listen to the misguided infant. Just wait until she steps on your toes, and that feeling won't be so strong. I speak from sad experience.

JEAN—Well, perhaps not; but, Bob, you said you had something to tell me. What is it?

BOB—You remember Violet Brace, don't you?

JEAN—I should say I do! She was in my class in college, and a perfect wonder at our dramatics. Every one knew and liked her.

BOB—Yes, she spoke of having been in college with you. Did you know that she went on the stage?

JEAN—No—really? Well, I'm sure she'll make a splendid success of it. She was a mighty fine, earnest girl.

BOB—You voice my sentiments exactly. She has made a great success, and is playing here now under the name of Violet de Bracy.

JEAN—How lovely! I can go to see her. I'd love to see her again.

BOB—That won't be necessary, for she's coming here with me to meet Cara and you. The fact is, Jean, we're engaged!

JEAN—(*Springing to her feet and shaking hands with him.*) Bobbie, how splendid! Congratulations.

BOB—Thanks. The only trouble is that Cara is afraid to have me bring Violet here while the amiable auntie is on the field of action. You see, the stage as well as smoking is an invention of the Devil. Did you know that? (*Mimics Aunt Minerva's tone.*)

JEAN—Oh, what a shame! However, she may not stay long, and in the meantime we can go to see Violet.

BOB—Yes, that's so. (*Bell rings loudly.*)

JEAN—Excuse me a moment. You see, Sir, I have to wait on the door. (*Exit center laughing.*)

(*Bob smokes in silence. Enter center Jean and Victor, he with his overcoat still on and carrying his hat.*)

VICTOR—Hello, Bob! You here? I thought you had a meeting to attend this afternoon.

BOB—(*Turning in surprise.*)—So I had. I've been to it and gotten back. But how about you and your appointment with the—dentist, wasn't it?

VICTOR—(*Confused*)—Oh—er—yes. I'm going to him later on.

BOB—(*Rising and walking toward left exit*)—Well, don't forget it. A neglected tooth, like a neglected woman, is mighty painful to deal with. (*Exit left.*)

JEAN—Won't you take off your coat?

VICTOR—Thanks. I'd like to awfully, but I really can stay only a moment.

JEAN—Well, then, do sit down anyhow.

(*Victor seats himself at right on couch, and Jean sits near him in an arm-chair.*)

VICTOR—(*Leaning forward eagerly*)—I say, Miss Seelye, will you go motoring with me to-morrow afternoon? I have something to say to you that can't wait. I—er—meant to say it now, but since I've told Bob that I had this dentist appointment, I suppose I'll have to go.

JEAN—You *told* Bob? Well, haven't you any appointment?

VICTOR—No—you see, I did have one with Bob, but I wanted to see you in a hurry, so I broke it with

him by telling him I had to go to the dentist's. Now, how was I to know he'd turn up here, too? *He* said he had a meeting to attend!

JEAN—I see; but I don't approve of your methods to get interviews with me, Mr. Merrill.

VICTOR—Well, I know; but won't you please go with me to-morrow? It's—it's awfully important.

JEAN—I'll tell you what I'll do. You don't deserve to be answered now, but I'll write you a note if I decide to go, and leave it on the corner of this table (*points to corner*) late this afternoon. Then (*smiling*) after you get back from the *dentist's,* you may look on the table, and if there is nothing there, I've refused your invitation; but if there's a note there, it will be an acceptance.

VICTOR—Yes, but won't people think it looks odd to see a note addressed to me on the table? Any one might come in and see it, and naturally think it queer.

JEAN—That's so; but, you see, I can't be sure that my—ahem—duties as housemaid will leave me free late this afternoon, and unless I send a message, a note is the only way out.

VICTOR—Oh, well, let it be a note, and we'll take our chances on being discovered.

JEAN—Wait—I have it! In your youth, did you ever write with milk?

VICTOR—Write with milk? No; my form of insanity doesn't show itself until maturity is reached.

JEAN—No, I really have a serious plan in mind. When you use milk to write with on white paper, of course it doesn't show.

VICTOR—Yes, even my feeble intellect can grasp that truth. What next?

JEAN—Next, you hold the paper near the heat of a fire, and the milk scorches, so that the writing will show. Do you begin to see?

VICTOR—(*Jumping up*)—See? You're a regular genius! While it might look strange to see a note addressed to me on the table, surely no one could suspect an innocent little piece of white paper of carrying con-

cealed weapons. Hooray! I'll toast your message, never fear!

JEAN—(*Cooly*)—Hadn't you better wait till you get it?

VICTOR—(*Calming down*)—That's right. Try to cheer me up a bit. Well, now, I must be going, or Bob will insist on escorting me to the dentist, and that might really prove embarrassing. (*He moves toward center door, with his back to the left entrance. Jean faces him.*)

JEAN—You're sure you can't stay longer?

VICTOR—Sorry, but I ought not to. You know Bob!

JEAN—Just a little while longer to see the rest of the family? (*Aunt Minerva, dressed for the street, enters from the left and hears Jean's last remark and the next of Victor's.*)

VICTOR—(*Shaking his finger at her*)—Don't start teasing! "Get thee behind me, Satan." (*Makes a low bow and gesture. and turning, comes face to face with Aunt Minerva, who was directly behind him when he made his last remark.*)

Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Davis. I didn't know that you were here! (*Mirth and consternation struggle for expression in his face.*)

AUNT M.—(*Crushingly*)—That was quite evident, young man.

VICTOR—I'm really very sorry! I was just going. Good afternoon. (*Exit center.*)

AUNT M.—(*To Jean*)—You, Miss, stay just where you are. (*Goes to left door and calls*) Cara!

(*Enter Cara from left.*)

CARA—Yes, Aunt Minerva.

AUNT M.—(*With righteous indignation*)—This young hussy was flirting in a most outrageous manner with that Merrill man who was here last night, when I entered the room and surprised them, just a few moments ago. What have you to say for yourself? (*Turning on Jean.*)

CARA—Oh, Aunt Minerva, you really oughtn't to

speak to her like that. You see, she isn't quite an ordinary maid.

AUNT M.—An ordinary maid? Good gracious! I should hope not. Ordinary maids don't loaf around when they're supposed to be earning their wages, and attempt to entertain their employer's guests. Most extra-ordinary, I call it! (*Exit wrathfully enter, Cara and Jean sink weakly into chairs.*)

CARA—That dreadful old busy-body! My dear, I'm so sorry to have had this happen. Everything has gone wrong since she's come, and now we don't even dare let poor Bob bring the girl he's engaged to here as long as Aunt Minerva stays, for fear of consequences. It's horrid to have rich relatives who are also hateful and to have to try to be nice to them. I'm getting to the stage where I don't care a rap for her old money. I wish she'd leave it for a cat orphan asylum.

JEAN—Never mind, Cara, I don't care now a bit. It was just rather sudden, that was all.

CARA—Sudden? I should say so. You poor thing; can't I get something for you? After a scene like that you really must need something.

JEAN—No, thank you. (*As Cara rises to go out left.*) Oh, yes; I think I would like some milk, if you please.

CARA—Certainly. I'll bring it to you right away. (*Exit left.*)

JEAN—Well, that was easy; and here is a pen (*picks up one from table*), and (*rummaging through papers*) I know I saw a piece of paper when I was having my dusting lesson this morning. Ah! here it is.

(*Re-enter Cara left, with a glass of milk.*)

CARA—Here you are, dear. Now just drink this and then rest a while. You must be awfully tired; you've had such a strenuous day. We never should have been able to get on without you. (*Bell rings. Exit Jean center. Re-enter with hat-box, which she puts down near armchair by fireplace.*)

JEAN—There; that must be Auntie's hat that I had instructions about.

CARA—But why leave it here? Let me take it to her room.

JEAN—Not if you value my life. I was to "leave it in this room, young woman. Understand, this room!" (*Mimics Aunt Minerva's voice, and then continues going back to table.*) May I use some of your things here to write a letter presently?

CARA—Certainly, and now I'll leave you to get a little rest. (*Exit left.*)

JEAN—(*Pulls paper toward her, dips pen in milk and writes, reading as she does so.*) "Yes, I'll come." That's enough. In fact, the paper itself shows my acceptance. There (*puts it on corner of table*), now I'll make off to my room with this. (*Exit left with glass of milk.*)

PHILIP—(*Enter from center Philip. Takes pipe out of his pocket and goes to table for matches.*) Hello! wonder where the matches are. Why, all my smoking things are gone! (*Looks over at wall*) And my pipe-rack! Now, who the Devil moved those things? Certainly not Cara, for I've just got her broken in to the stage where she lets my things alone. And not a match in sight! Suppose I'll have to go to the kitchen and beg. This is a nice state of affairs. (*Catches sight of paper.*) Aha! (*Looks it over*) all right. No writing on that. Just what I want! (*He twists the paper into a taper, sticks it into the fire, lights his pipe with it, and then throws it back into fire.*) It's a wonder they didn't put the fire out, too; that smokes! (*Goes to door and calls*) Cara! (*Paces back and forth furiously, puffing at pipe. Enter Cara from left.*)

CARA—Yes, dear?

PHILIP—"Yes, dear"! Well, "dear" wants to know something about this, and this! (*Points to wall and table.*) Somebody's been getting too fresh.

CARA—But Philip—Aunt Minerva will be so angry if you put them back.

PHILIP—Aunt Minerva? What has she to do with it?

CARA—She took them down, or rather she made Jean do it, and put them under the couch.

PHILIP (*On his knees in front of the couch, dragging out his possessions.*) Oh, she did, did she? Well, I'll show her that I'm still boss in my own house! (*Puts things back on table.*)

CARA—(*Weakly*)—But her will!

PHILIP—Bother her will! It's another kind of will I'm interested in at present, and I'll show her whose is stronger—her's or mine! (*Climbs up on chair to hang up pipe-rack.*) There, that's something like. (*Aunt Minerva appears at center door and watches proceedings. Philip gets down from chair and steps in hat-box.*)

CARA (*Wailing*)—Oh, Philip, Aunt Minerva's hat!

PHILIP—Confound Aunt Minerva!

AUNT M. (*Stepping forward*)—What's that young man?

Curtain.

ACT III

SCENE—*Same as Act II.*

TIME—*Morning of the next day.*

Curtain rises on empty room. (*Enter from the left Victor. Goes hastily over to table and looks about everywhere.*)

VICTOR—No, it hasn't been mislaid. I thought yesterday afternoon when I came and didn't find it that it might have been slipped under something. (*Looks under the table and even moves a chair or so in his frantic search.*) Evidently she's refused my invitation, and she knew what it meant, too. What the dickens did she want to explain so carefully about that milk-writing trick, though? Well, I'll just show her that I don't care what she did about it. Two can play at her little game. It's her turn to guess. (*Savagely sits down near table, picks up paper and begins to read.*)

(*Enter from center Jean as maid. He pretends not to see her.*)

JEAN—Good morning.

VICTOR (*Shortly*)—Oh, good morning, Miss Seelye. Lovely day, isn't it?

JEAN (*Aside*)—How queerly he acts! (*To Victor*) Yes, a fine day for motoring. Did—did you get my message?

VICTOR (*Aside*)—Well, that is rubbing it in! Here goes. (*To her*)—Oh, yes. I got it all right. Ha, ha!

JEAN (*Nervously*)—Ha, ha—I'll call Philip and Cara. They wanted to see you about something. (*Exit left.*) (*Bell rings.*)

VICTOR (*Rises and throws down paper*)—The deuce take the girl! What have I ever done to her to make her act like that? (*Enter Bob center with his overcoat on and carrying hat and cane.*)

BOB—Hello, old man. Do you know what the date is?

VICTOR—Why, it's the first of April, isn't it?

BOB—Right you are! April fool's day, and I'm going to announce my engagement! Isn't that the best kind of a joke?

VICTOR (*Dazed*)—So that's it, is it? Engaged to Bob, eh? I'm the April fool, it seems.

BOB—Stop mumbling to yourself and congratulate me! Don't you think it's nice?

VICTOR (*Shaking hands with Bob*)—Of course, I do, old fellow. She's a fine girl.

BOB (*Amazed*)—But I didn't know that you knew (*Enter from left Philip, Cara and Jean.*)

PHILIP—Hello, you two! You're just the ones we need to complete this important meeting. Come, gather round me, children. (*All group themselves about center-table.*) I've been thinking——

BOB (*Interrupting*)—Congratulations!

PHILIP—As I was about to say when I was so rudely interrupted, I've been thinking things over—things that concern us all—and I'm going to tell you the result of my cogitations.

BOB (*Takes off his coat and lays it down, with his hat and cane.*)—Sounds as if we were in for it, doesn't it?

CARA—I move we sit down, anyhow. (*All seat themselves but Philip, who remains standing back of table and facing audience.*)

PHILIP—You know that Cara and I, two days ago, were suddenly plunged into a most embarrassing predicament, and that we called on you all for aid.

JEAN (*Looking at her costume*)—Yes, but why this elaborate prelude?

PHILIP—Because we have changed our ideas in these last two days, and a new plan of campaign is suggested.

VICTOR—Aha! the plot curdles! Hasten to the thrills!

PHILIP—Well, if you'll all keep still long enough to let me talk I may be able to explain.

BOB—Oh, hurry up! You're the only one who's had any show at talking at all. What are you kicking about?

PHILIP—My little man, will you keep still until brother finishes, or must he shut you up in a closet?

CARA—Oh, please hurry, Phil!

PHILIP—All I want to say is this: (*Aunt Minerva appears in center doorway unobserved by the group within, who are intent on Philip's remarks. She listens until the end of the scene, smiling grimly from time to time, then disappears.*) As you know, Aunt Minerva is rich, and we are as near relatives as any she has—in fact, a bit closer than the rest. When she came here, Cara and I made up our mind to be nice to her, to do nothing to offend her in any way. Well, I won't pretend that in this decision we had no ulterior motives. However, that is over. (*Aunt Minerva pricks up her ears, and Jean and Victor show surprise.*) When we made these plans and called on you to help us, we didn't realize how digustingly humiliating and unworthy it would be to truckle to that impossibly exacting old woman. (*Aunt Minerva nods her head.*) As I said, that is over! (*Bangs his fist down on table.*) We don't care where her money goes, and beyond the ordinary civilities that one is

bound to extend to an older woman, we will not give in to her whims further. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you (*raising his hand as if he were drinking a toast*) the "Anti-Aunt Society" formed to-day by us!

ALL (*Rising*)—"The Anti-Aunts"!

PHILIP—As President pro-tem of this society, I move we give a special vote of thanks to Jean Seelye—a brick,—who gallantly came to our rescue when the ship of domestic tranquillity was sinking.

ALL—Hurrah for Jean! (*Aunt Minerva's expression is a study here, as she realizes the meaning of these remarks and sees Jean's bow of thanks.*)

JEAN—Oh, thanks, good people. I really enjoy it immensely. Besides, I know how to dust a room now. (*Laughs!*)

BOB—You bet she does. I saw her get a lesson! Ha, ha! "Smoking is an institution of the Devil." (*To Philip*) "Did you know it?"

(*Aunt Minerva frowns in his direction.*)

PHILIP—In view of our—our newly—(*pauses*)

VICTOR—Emancipated?

PHILIP—Thanks. In view of our newly emancipated condition, then, Bob and I have evolved a plan.

BOB—This is the interesting part—where I come in. But I like the nerve of the man,—"Bob and I have evolved a plan!" Huh, truthfully speaking, Bobbie did the work!

PHILIP (*Crossly*)—Oh, for heavens' sake, you human phonograph, go on and do the talking yourself.

BOB—Wait a minute—I've thought of a riddle. If I'm a human phonograph, is Merrill (*pointing to Victor*) a human Victor? Ha, ha!

(*All looked bored to death, including Aunt Minerva.*)

CARA (*Tactfully*)—Go on, Bobbie, please. Don't you want to tell them about Violet?

BOB—Sure I do. Well, granting all that our esteemed President says to be true, we will proceed to the solution. In other words, arrange a speedy exit for Aunt Minerva from our midst! I have the great

pleasure of numbering among my friends a very attractive young lady who goes by the name of Violet de Bracy, and is an avowed follower of Thespian pursuits.

VICTOR—Will you kindly talk English, or shall we get an interpreter?

BOB (*Witheringly*)—I suppose *you'll* understand it if I say she's an awfully jolly girl who's on the stage.

VICTOR—Actress, hey?

BOB (*Sarcastically*)—How quickly you grasp the situation. I'm sure I never saw such brilliancy of perception. (*Ducks as Victor moves toward him.*) At any rate, Aunt Minerva has a most terrific horror of the stage and all its attributes. Consequently, I have prevailed upon this young lady to loom on the scene of action—pose as my fiancee, and, presto—exit Aunt Minerva!

(*Aunt Minerva takes in all this last speech, then with a grim smile vanishes.*)

JEAN—I begin to see. Oh, Bob, you're a wonder!

VICTOR (*Aside*)—That's "love's young dream," I suppose. (*Walks moodily over to fireplace.*)

PHILIP (*Taking out his watch anxiously.*)—It's past the time when she was to have arrived, but no sign of her yet. You don't suppose she's backed out, do you?

BOB—Say, my boy, if you'd waited for her as many times as I have, you'd keep cool now. Besides, she had to rig up for the part this morning.

CARA—Rig up for the part?

BOB—Sure! Don't you suppose she knows what to do? She's going to *look* like the stage this A. M., so Aunt Minerva won't be disappointed. However, if you're anxious, I'll telephone. (*Goes over to 'phone.*) 1804 Morning, Central. (*Pause*) Hello, is Miss Brace in? What's that? About twenty minutes ago? Thank you. Good-bye. (*Turns to others*) That was her maid, and she says that Violet started about twenty minutes ago. She's due now. (*Bell rings.*) Hello, there she is! I'll go.

JEAN—No, I'll go. I'm the maid. (*Starts toward door.*)

PHILIP (*Laughing*)—Oh, have some heart, Jean. Let Bob go. (*Exit Bob center.*)

(*Enter Aunt Minerva left.*)

AUNT M.—Good-morning, young people! In my youth, we didn't stand around doing nothing at this hour of the morning. I don't know what things are coming to, I'm sure. (*Walks over to Jean, who is standing in back, near bookcase.*) Well, young woman, whatever are you idling around for again? Another evidence that you are not quite an ordinary maid, I suppose!

PHILIP—Aunt Minerva, I must insist on——

AUNT M. (*Turning on him suddenly*)—Highty-tighty! Insist, young man? Don't you take that tone to me!

PHILIP (*Raising his voice*)—I said I must insist-——

(*Enter from center Bob and Violet. She is very good-looking, but a trifle made up, and very elaborately and strikingly dressed in plumed hat, furs and a long coat, which completely covers her up. She carries a small toy dog.*)

CARA (*Coming forward to greet them*)—And this is Violet, I suppose? Welcome to our house, my new sister!

AUNT M.—New sister? New sister? What's this?

BOB (*Stepping forward, takes Violet by the hand and leads her up to Aunt Minerva*)—"This," as you flatteringly call her, is my future wife—Miss Violet de Bracy. Violet, my Aunt—Miss Davis. (*Violet bows in affected way.*)

AUNT M.—Cara! Philip! What is the meaning of this disgraceful performance? Do you mean to say-—

PHILIP (*Not paying the slightest attention to her*)—We're very glad to meet Bob's fiancee, Violet, and we hope his family will prove satisfactory to you.

VIOLET—Thank you, Philip—I suppose I'm to call you that now?

PHILIP—You bet. (*Motioning to Victor*) May I

present Mr. Merrill, Miss de Bracy? (*Violet bows again.*)

VICTOR—Delighted, I'm sure.

AUNT M. (*Striving to be heard*)—You don't mean to accept this creature as one of the family, do you?

BOB (*Turning to her savagely*)—See here, Aunt Minerva, I've stood a lot from you in the course of my existence, but that's the time you went too far. I'm engaged to this lady, and you are to treat her with respect. Do you understand?

VICTOR (*Aside*)—Jove! he couldn't have done it better if he really had been engaged to her. Bob ought to go on the stage himself.

VIOLET (*Laying her hand on Bob's arm*)—Bob, really you mustn't talk to her like that. I don't mind in the least what that person says about me!

AUNT M.—Person, hey? That's the last straw! Philip and Cara, do you intend to stand by and listen while I'm called names in your house?

PHILIP—I understood that you were doing the calling of names first, Aunt Minerva.

AUNT M.—So that is your answer, is it? I'll give you just one more chance. Choose between that woman and myself. Either she goes or I do. Choose!

CARA (*Firmly*)—But Aunt Minerva, we can't be anything but cordial to Bob's future wife, you know. Besides (*walking over to Bob and Violet and taking a hand of each*), we don't want to, do we, Philip?

PHILIP—Certainly not!

AUNT M.—That settles it. I shall leave at once—*at once,* do you understand? (*No one protests, so she goes out at center. Every one relaxes.*)

VIOLET—Thank goodness that's over. That's the most strenuous part I ever played. Jean Seelye, you don't know how glad I am to see you again (*as Jean comes up to speak to her*). I was crazy to speak to you when I came in, but Bob had warned me that you were in the play, too. Bobbie, will you please take this miserable little yappy, snappy apology for a dog and shut it up somewhere? I had to borrow it, for I

thought it would add greatly to the effect. (*Bob gingerly takes the dog and exits center.*) Jean, will you help me remove the rest of this make-up so that the family can tell what I really look like? I'm sure, Cara and Philip, you stood the shock of my present appearance very well.

CARA—Oh, we were warned. Jean, take Violet to my room, will you? (*Exeunt Jean and Violet left.*)

(*Enter Aunt M., center, dressed for street and carrying handbag and umbrella. Also the hat-box, badly battered.*)

AUNT M.—Well, young people, I'm going, and I warn you that this isn't the last you will hear of this episode. (*Philip and Cara bow, and Aunt Minerva exit center.*)

PHILIP—Hum! That probably means that we'll get cut out of her will; but I don't care, do you?

CARA—Not a bit.

PHILIP—I knew you wouldn't; you're the stuff! (*Puts his arm around her, forgetting Victor, who after Jean and Violet left, has been sitting over by fireplace.*)

VICTOR—Ahem! I trust I'm not in the way?

PHILIP—Not at all. That's a good object lesson for you. According to your story yesterday and the day before, you'll be needing a little information on such subjects before long.

VICTOR—That was only a mistake of mine, and it's all off now. You see, I told you what I thought about her feelings for Bob and his for her, and to-day he told me he was going to announce his engagement; so it's all over.

CARA—But, Victor, he did announce his engagement. What has that to do with Jean?

VICTOR—He isnt really engaged to that girl, is he? Why, I thought that was all for Aunt Minerva's benefit!

(*Enter from left Jean, still in maid's attire, and Violet, every trace of make-up removed, in a very demure little morning dress. Her hat has been removed and*

shows her hair very simply arranged. At the same time Bob enters from the center and goes to meet Violet.)

Bob—Well, family and friends, what do you think of her? Hasn't she earned her admission to the honored Society of "Anti-Aunts"? I tell you, she did the business!

Philip—She did, and we're mighty thankful to her. Why, do you know, yesterday the tyranny got to such a state that all my smoking things were taken from me? Fortunately, I had my pet pipe in my pocket, but I even had to resort to lighting it with a scrap of paper that happened to be on the table, just inviting me to use it as a taper. (*All laugh.*)

Jean and Victor (*Suddenly getting an idea at the same time*)—A scrap of paper? Where?

Philip (*Pointing to corner of table*)—Here; but you needn't get so excited about it. It didn't have any writing on it.

Victor—Then, no wonder I didn't get my note!

Jean—But you said you did!

Victor—Well, I thought you were merely trying to be funny at my expense; the fact is, it's the first of April to-day.

Jean—I thought you acted queerly; but, you see, I did write it.

Victor—Yes, thank goodness!

Cara—What are you two talking about?

Philip—That's what I want to know!

Jean (*Confused, to Victor*)—You explain, won't you? (*Bell rings.*) Oh, I'll answer that; I have the habit. (*Exit center.*)

Philip—Now, Victor, what's up? Why these radiant looks, blushes, etc., over a scrap of paper?

Victor—The fact is, that paper was the signal of our engagement.

Cara—Your engagement? Then you and Jean are engaged?

(*Re-enter Jean, center, hands note to Philip.*)

Victor—They want to know if we're engaged, Jean.

Shall I tell them "Yes"?

JEAN—Why, I suppose so.

PHILIP—Well, we'll clear out in a few minutes; but, first, just listen to this (*Reads from note*):

"April the first.

"To the Anti-Aunts":——

ALL—"Anti-Aunts"? Why, who——

PHILIP—Listen! (*Reads*): "Don't you think our last scene was quite a success, and how did you like the exit 'from your midst' of Aunt Minerva? You see, I happened to overhear the whole plan beforehand, so I couldn't depart from the character that you expected me to take. If you had seen as much false politeness as I have, on account of benefits to be gained, you would realize how thoroughly I enjoyed and respected your revolt. Kindly convey my best regards to the Misses Seelye and Brace, and tell them I do not know which is the better actress. As I told you when I left, this is not the last you will hear of the episode, as I am sending this by special messenger from my solicitors, where I have been changing my will in favor of my nephews, Philip and Bob.

"MINERVA DAVIS.

"P. S.—I hope some day to become a member of the 'Anti-Aunts.'"

JEAN—Didn't I tell you she was all right. Hurrah for the Anti-Aunts and Aunt Minerva!

Curtain.

"Their Lordships"

BY

EDITH M. BURROWS

Cast of Characters

MRS. AUGUSTUS SMYTHE-BROWN,
A lady with social aspirations

MR. AUGUSTUS SMYTHE-BROWN,
Her unaspiring husband, who is also very deaf

BETTY SMYTHE-BROWN,
DOROTHY SMYTHE-BROWN,
WILL SMYTHE-BROWN,
JAMES SMYTHE-BROWN,
Their children; all young college graduates.

NED HILL.....*Harvard friend of the boys*

MRS. MONTGOMERY.....*Social dictator*

OLIVIA MONTGOMERY,
Her daughter, with dramatic leanings

LORD RANSOME,
Young Englishman; friend of the Smythe-Browns

MAID AND BUTLER.

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"DEAR CYRIL"

By

Edith M. Burrows

Cast of Characters

MRS. BATES....A widow who keeps a boarding house
MAGGIE.....Her Irish maid of all work
TEDDY BATES—
The "Imp of Satan," aged 11, who stutters
DAVID GRAHAM—
Young would-be-author at the Bates house
ALICE WHITE—
A budding authoress at the Bates house
THE POSTMAN—
Of great importance to David and Alice
JAMES SCOTT—
Representing the Columbia Publishing Co.
HARVEY LOFTUS—
Representing the Manhattan Publishing Co.
A DETECTIVE.....Who complicates matters

SCENE.

The living room of a country boarding house.

TIME.

The present.

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British copyright secured

OPERETTAS AND CANTATAS FOR JUVENILES

Price

Brownies' Whispers, The. A Floral Cantata. Written by Clara J. Denton. Music by W. Rhys-Herbert.....net .75

As its name indicates, the story is interwoven with messages from the Brownies and songs by various flowers, and is quite a pretentious work for children, although not difficult. It is an exceedingly beautiful spectacular song-play and may include both boys and girls, or be composed entirely of girls, as may suit the needs of the occasion. The different classes or groups, are dressed to portray the characters they represent; some roses, some lilies, some pansies, sweet peas, etc., and in a variety of shadings or colors so that individual taste may be largely consulted in the making of gowns. Of course the Brownies have not so much individuality in their costumes, but their drill and other work is interesting enough to compensate for any disappointment which might arise on that score. The entire work is heartily commended to teachers who are looking for something out of the ordinary for public presentation.

Dame Nature's Tea Party. Operetta in one act. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by V. Hammerel.....net .60

This tea party of the Seasons is presented in a very quaint and interesting manner. Dame Nature is a very old and peculiar lady, who has invited Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, to have tea with her. Her waiting maid, Flora, is a comedy character, and should have a very strong sense of humor. The four seasons are dressed to represent their individual characters, and present a very attractive appearance, when suitably garbed. This may be arranged after an inexpensive fashion, and with very little trouble.

Fairies of the Seasons, The. A very easy cantata. H. A. Donald.net .60

An exquisite spectacular production suitable for children of various ages. It is an imaginative conception, giving opportunity for the display of much originality in costumes, and well worth all the time and trouble which may be expended upon its presentation. Of all forms of entertainment gotten up to interest children, nothing exceeds the beauty of a Fairy March, and this one lacks nothing which could give grace to such a performance. It only requires about forty minutes to present, and for that reason, very small children might be trained for the Spring Fairies' part, children a little larger for the Summer Fairies, those still older for the Autumn Fairies, and those larger yet for the Winter Fairies. It should really be a question of size, rather than age, which should determine the character taken, and children ought to be well matched in size. As a Christmas or May-Day entertainment, nothing could exceed the attractiveness of the Fairies of the Seasons for public production.

Jigamaree. Nautical Operetta in two acts for male characters. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by V. Hammerel..net .75

An attractive little operetta suitable equally well for the older or younger element of "boys." Specialties, such as dancing of a hornpipe, etc., can be introduced. Scenery and costumes need not be elaborate.

Magic Ring, The. Operetta. Th. Schmid and L. Bonvin.....net .75

This little romantic, comic operetta is so arranged that it may be performed with equal effect by either boys or girls and may be given with or without a chorus. The plot is entertaining, the music is very pleasant and singable, lying well in the range and the capacity of children. The piano accompaniment is thoroughly musical. Part of the text is spoken, but most of it is sung. Folk lore enters into the story, as when the voice of the cuckoo is heard. There is a magic ring which "good luck will bring, and four times will your wish fulfill." When boys play and sing, dwarfs appear; for girls there is a fairy queen with fairy attendants. The text of the book is given both in English and German.

The Bogus School Inspector. Frank Booth.....net .60

A comic operetta for boys or girls, or both, in two acts, 7 characters and chorus. Time, about one hour. An exceedingly amusing play with humorous incidents.

The Enchanted Apple. A. J. Foxwell and V. Hammerel.....net .60

A dramatic cantata, chiefly girl characters. Two-part choruses. Time, 1½ hours.

A Musical Picnic. E. O. Gilbert.....net .50

Operetta for female voices. Four characters. Time, about 20 minutes.

May Queen, The. A fairy cantata in two scenes. Anthony J. Schindler .....net .60

Different flowers are supposed to be represented as the Little Floral Maidens, with the sentiments belonging to the flowers chosen. There is a squabble between

Price

Old Singing Woman, The. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by V. Hammerel.....net .75

A quaint little operetta in one act for female voices. It is cast for six characters, but more may be introduced in the chorus of shepherdesses, if desired. Three of the cast have solos, one of whom must have an exceptionally good voice. This is the part designed for The Old Singing Woman, who has stolen the voices of so many young girls, that she is enabled to sing extraordinarily well herself. She has a soprano voice, as has Celia (a shepherdess), whose voice she steals. The Fairy who gives warning to the shepherdesses, sings a solo in mezzo-soprano, and the chorus of shepherdesses is composed of altos and sopranos. The work is a bright, well-written little thing, and is sure to take well with teachers who are looking for a fanciful composition to show off good voices.

Verdict of the Flowers, The. Cantata. Written by James Watson. Music by C. H. Lewis.....net .60

An exquisite little production composed entirely for female voices. The first scene opens on the court of Queen Flora, who speaks the opening lines, after which the Snowdrop sings a solo favoring the Rose, and a chorus takes up the words, singing the same praises. This is followed by the Violet, the Heliotrope, the Daisy, the Convolvulus, all singing the praises of the Rose, the chorus joining in between each solo, and finally ending in a grand finale, crowning the Rose as Queen. The costuming is, of course, to be in keeping with each flower singing, but may be simply and inexpensively made. The whole performance may be gotten up beautifully, at a very small cost, and with very little trouble.

Old Glory or "The Boys of '76." A patriotic operetta for boys. Anthony J. Schindler.....net .60

A fine operetta for boys exclusively, and is particularly suitable for National celebrations. There are soldiers of the Continental and soldiers of the British armies, and officers of both sides. The dialogue earnestly appeals to the average boy, to say nothing of the uniforms, and, taken as a whole, the work is an excellent one of its kind. It requires some good voices for the singing parts, of which there are seven numbers; three solos, one trio, and three choruses, but it is a work which will repay all effort expended.

OPERETTAS AND CANTATAS FOR ADULTS

Bells of Elfarnie, The. A cantata for solo and chorus (three parts) of female voices, with accompaniment of piano or strings. Written by Arthur J. Godden. Music by Hugh Blair....net .75

The work is one which should appeal strongly to ladies' choirs and girl schools' choruses and other similar bodies of singers. "Bells of Elfarnie" is well written, modern (but not too much so) and of reasonable length. It is laid out for two solo voices (soprano and contralto) and three-part chorus. Dr. Blair always writes charmingly for voices, and this cantata is no exception to his general rule. On the contrary, he may be said to approach a higher level of excellence in this cantata than he has hitherto attained in works of the same kind. He is particularly happy in his use of the leit-motif.

Bulbul. Comic operetta in two acts for mixed voices. With accompaniment of piano or orchestra. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by W. Rhys-Herbert. Vocal score....net 1.00
Stage manager's book.....net .75

"As if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on" we had many letters from our friends in various sections, making inquiry as to future work by W. Rhys-Herbert and Maude Elizabeth Inch. It gives us much pleasure to announce to them and to the public in general, therefore, that we are now ready to offer another charming operetta by these gifted authors. "Bulbul" is their latest production, and is about as quaint and alluring in its attractiveness as it is possible to conceive a musical travesty. "Look at thy heart and write," said Sir Phillip Sydney. We would add, "music," for as Emerson says, "Music is the poor man's Parnassus." Probably neither of these great men had in mind such writings or such music as is contained in "Bulbul," "Sylvia" or "A Nautical Knot," but another great man, Richard Wagner, has said, "Melody is the absolute language in which the musician speaks to every heart," and surely the music of Rhys-Herbert speaks to all hearts—in mirth and gladness, in cheer and animation. The new operetta, "Bulbul," is inspiring in its fun-provoking qualities. It will prove to be thoroughly interesting from commencement to finish. There is not a dry movement in it. The music is bright, melodious, tuneful, healthful, with no catch-

penny smartness about it. The lyrics are mirth-provoking to an almost unheard of degree, and the text portions being so absolutely funny that we defy any one to come away from a performance without a goodly fund of laughter stored up for future strength and health. There are eight characters in the main cast, and in addition there are also Maids of Honor, and attendants to the Prince, making opportunity for an elaborate cast of characters, when desired. In the last act the minuet is danced, and the scene is indescribably beautiful.

King Hal. A romantic opera in three acts. For mixed voices with piano or orchestral accompaniment. Written by Daniel O'Connell and Allan Dunn. Music by Humphrey Stewart.

Vocal score .....net 1.25
Libretto.....net .25
Chorus score.....net 1.00

The scene of the opera is at Windsor. Dr. Stewart's music is light and tuneful, and has all the elements of success. There are many "catchy" melodies, and the concerted work is generally built up well. Of course there is a waltz—and it is a good one—which in this instance is shared by soloists and chorus. "King Hal" is not too difficult a work for an organization that has had some previous experience.

"A Nautical Knot" or "The Belle of Barnstapoole." Operetta in two acts for mixed voices. With piano or orchestral accompaniment. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by W. Rhys-Herbert. Vocal score.....net 1.00
Stage manager's book.....net .75

Sylvia. Arcadian operetta in two acts. For mixed voices. With piano or orchestral accompaniment. Written by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by W. Rhys-Herbert. Vocal score..net 1.00
Stage manager's book.....net .75

Over 1,000 performances by amateur organizations (church choirs, high school choruses, etc.) of the above mentioned operettas have been reported. The best possible recommendation.

The Drum-Major. Operetta in two acts. For soli and chorus of mixed voices. Book and lyrics by Maude Elizabeth Inch. Music by Edward F. Johnston. Vocal score..... 1.00
Vocal score with book in French..... 1.00

In "The Drum-Major" the author has drawn upon the Eighteenth Century for inspiration, and has produced a very attractive story of the First Empire in France. The tone is distinctly military. Sergeant Leroux has arrived in Passy, near Paris, for the purpose of enlisting recruits for the army. Unfortunately his visit has fallen upon the village fete-day, and the young men are indifferent to the charms of military glory. In addition to this, Clarice Dupre, a general's daughter, is the innocent cause of the Sergeant being left severely alone. On discovering this she offers her services, and in a short time all the young men of the place, catching her enthusiasm, join the colors. Jean, the village musical genius, is completely enthralled by the beauty of Clarice and the dream of writing a march that will inflame the soldiers to unheard-of feats of bravery. His sweetheart, Babette, mourns his departure, while Leroux, deeply in love with Clarice, marches away with no less than fifty-six future field marshals. Act Two opens with the celebrations which follow the fall of the Bastile, two years later. Clarice, hoping to have news of Leroux, comes back to Passy, but nothing is known save that Jean's march-song has become famous. Suddenly the weary soldiers are seen limping back painfully to their native town. Babette joyfully forgives Jean and Clarice is gladdened by the arrival of the brave Sergeant, who forgets in the arms of his dear lady-love all the toils and tribulations of the campaign. Of the twenty-eight numbers in this operetta there are so many worthy of praise that we scarcely know which to select for special commendation. The song of Leroux in the First Act, "What Sound is That Which Breaks the Air?" with the chorus, "Tramp, tramp, tramp!" and the chorus in the second act "Frenchmen Up and On to Glory!" are particularly strong and martial. Cast: Clarice (soprano), the prettiest woman in Paris; Sergeant Leroux (tenor) of the French Army; Jean (baritone), the village musical genius; Babette (alto), his adoring sweetheart; Julien, Gaspard, Pierre, recruits; Antoinette, Susanne, Jacqueline, village girls; Victor (speaker's role), a boy of the village; Marcel (speaker's role), a prominent citizen and "orator of the day." Chorus· Villagers, girls, recruits, etc. With piano or orchestral accompaniment.

Ten Sketches from Charles Dickens

The following sketches are intended to interest the young people in the works of Dickens, who did so much by his writings to improve the conditions of child-life. He was one of the first to realize the enormous value of children to the State, and all his life he was the warm champion of childood against oppression and wrong.

The sketches have been arranged so that they may be performed with the simplest possible scenery and accessories. The dresses should be in most cases, in the early Victorian style, and when these cannot be borrowed from friends or a costumer, it is advisable that they should be made up by the performers in some cheap and simple material. One Door or Entrance is sufficient for each scene, and, though a Curtain is preferable, Screens may be used if it is impossible to arrange a curtain.

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